

are not working the Senate, whenever we can, in a fair, bipartisan way is just wrong—just wrong.

Consider this: At this point in the calendar year in 2017, the first year of a Republican President and a Republican Senate majority—a one-to-one comparison to our current political configuration—the Senate held rollcall votes on 10 amendments—10—at this point in the first year of the Trump Presidency. On this bipartisan infrastructure bill alone, the Senate has held rollcall votes on 17 amendments. In 7 months, the 2017 Republican majority allowed rollcall votes on only 10 amendments, and we have done almost double that number in the past 7 days alone.

This is how I promised the Chamber would function under a Democratic majority. I promised it while we were fighting to get that majority, and we are fulfilling that promise now that we have it. Legislators should actually have a chance to legislate. No one can deny that we kept our word here in the Democratic majority.

Today, we will consider even more amendments, and then, hopefully, we can bring this bill to a close very shortly. Our goal is to pass both a bipartisan infrastructure bill and a budget resolution during this work period, and we will stay here to get both done.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SCHUMER. On another matter, climate. President Biden announced this morning that he will sign an Executive order to significantly escalate our country's fight against climate change.

Specifically, President Biden's Executive order will set an ambitious goal to make half of all new cars sold in America zero emissions by the end of the decade. He will announce further steps to address several of the worst climate-warming rules that were put in place under the Trump administration.

I applaud President Biden for taking necessary steps to put our country on a path to substantially reduce our carbon pollution. Climate change is the defining challenge of our times. We have no choice but to reduce our country's greenhouse gas emissions very quickly to reach the targets that will spare our country and our planet the worst effects of climate change, and we cannot do it without dealing with carbon pollution from cars we drive. Transportation is the biggest source of carbon pollution, accounting for roughly one-third of America's carbon output.

President Biden's Executive order is an important step in the right direction, and I am happy and proud to say it dovetails with an effort I have long advocated here in the Congress, even before the Biden Presidency. It is called Clean Cars for America. In fact, President Biden generously adopted our Clean Cars for America plan and placed it in his Build Back Better.

My Clean Cars for America proposal—and I have worked closely with Senator STABENOW, Senator PETERS, and others on this proposal—would help our country make the transition that President Biden is talking about today by making electric cars more affordable, expanding our charging infrastructure, and creating incentives to manufacture batteries and electric vehicles here in America. It is good for climate. It good for jobs. And it is good for America to become the center of electric car manufacturing in the world, as we have been with the traditional type of automobile.

The proposal—I am proud to say we worked hard to make this happen. Clean Cars for America is now, as I said, largely adopted in the Build Back Better plan and is supported not only by the environmental community, but by the major labor unions and several of the major car manufacturers as well. It is the first time on a major piece of climate legislation we have gotten such broad support.

The transition to electric vehicles, of course, is already underway, but it is not happening fast enough to reach the targets that President Biden announced today. Clean Cars for America is the way to supercharge the transition to electric vehicles, and large parts of it will be—some of it was put in the bipartisan infrastructure bill, but large parts of it we hope to add in the reconciliation process.

Put another way: If President Biden's Executive order represents the destination we need to reach on the horizon, our Clean Cars for America is the road to get there.

President Biden's announcement, combined with our Clean Cars proposal, represents the bold level of action we need to tackling carbon pollution from cars.

When Democrats assumed the majority, I instructed my committee chairs to find climate-reducing policies to incorporate into the legislation we work on. Earlier this year, the Senate passed the first major climate legislation in years when we reversed the Trump administration's methane emissions rule. And as we continue working on a bipartisan infrastructure bill and a budget resolution, I have committed that we will make historic investments in reversing climate change. I am proud to say our Clean Cars for America is going to be a very big part of that.

Democrats promised action on climate, and we are going to make it a vital part of the legislation we work on in the weeks to come. It is a big challenge, but one we must meet. It is so important for the future of our planet, for our children, and our grandchildren even more than for us.

EVICTION MORATORIUM

Mr. SCHUMER. One final matter, evictions. Earlier this week, the Biden administration announced that the CDC will adopt an eviction moratorium

to provide critical protections for another 60 days as our country continues its path towards full recovery.

I applaud everyone who made it happen, from the President to the CDC, to Speaker PELOSI, to Senator BROWN, as well as several of my Democratic colleagues in the House, including a brave band of New Yorkers, including Congress Member OCASIO-CORTEZ and Congressman JONES. Above all, Representative CORI BUSH gets huge credit—one person who changed things for tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of people, and everyone who stood with her as well.

As I explained yesterday, while this moratorium is an important safeguard to protect millions of American families in danger of evictions, it is not the only piece of the puzzle. Once the moratorium comes to an end—whenver that is—there is still a fundamental challenge of making up for a year of lost rent and lost mortgage payments.

Congress considered this problem very early this year. I pushed for, and we passed, along with Senator BROWN and so many others, substantial rental and mortgage assistance in the American Rescue Plan.

Unfortunately, State governments have been really uneven about distributing that crucial assistance. A few States—the State of Illinois, the State of Texas—have done a pretty good job, but many have not. Unfortunately, one of those that has done a very poor job distributing this money is my home State of New York.

Simply put: State governments, especially New York, must do a better job of distributing the \$47 billion Congress appropriated for emergency rental assistance. The money is there, but far too little has gone out the door.

In New York specifically, Congress sent more than \$2 billion to help renters in New York; and, inexplicably, some reports indicate less than 0.5 percent of New York's allocation had been received by tenants and landlords as of a week ago.

Today, I am sending a letter with colleagues in the New York delegation to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, calling on that office to hurry up to fix the inexcusable delays in rental assistance and immediately begin disbursing these funds.

We need to understand why New Yorkers are having such trouble navigating the process to get the money they need. There have been reports of frustrating crashes and glitches on the online application process, confusing instructions, and very little support to help the applicants, even though the money has been there for several months.

The clock is ticking to fix this mess. The State moratorium expires in less than a month, and the CDC's moratorium will give only one more month of protection after that. New York State needs to act quickly, and we expect a response by August 9 as to how we can

get a handle on these delays and, most importantly, get the money to New Yorkers faster so they can pay the rent.

By the way, many landlords, particularly small landlords, depend on this as well. If you worked hard—let's say you are a bus driver and you own a three-family house. When the tenants in your house don't pay you, you don't have any cushion and you have to pay the mortgage. So this bill will help with that as well, this proposal.

Right now, there are 6½ million Americans who are behind in their rent. According to the New York Times, over 400,000 renters in New York City alone owe a collective debt of \$2 billion.

Congress did its job by making sure that we have money in place to help these Americans avoid evictions. Now the States need to step it up to make sure that this money gets into the hands of renters as soon as possible.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). The Republican leader is recognized.

AWARDING FOUR CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS TO THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE AND THOSE WHO PROTECTED THE U.S. CAPITOL ON JANUARY 6, 2021

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this week, the Senate proudly and unanimously passed a resolution awarding a Congressional Gold Medal to the U.S. Capitol Police along with other law enforcement personnel who helped defend this institution on January 6.

Today, President Biden will sign this resolution into law, and the brave men and women who served that day will receive the highest honor that Congress can bestow.

With the home of our representative democracy literally under attack, the officers of the Capitol Police, their colleagues from the DC Metropolitan Police, and others made huge, huge sacrifices to keep all of us safe.

On January 6, Congress got a firsthand reminder of a reality that many American citizens face every day; that the brave men and women of law enforcement really are the thin blue line standing between peace and chaos.

I am so proud we are adding our own colleagues in blue to the list of extraordinary Americans that Congress has honored with its gold medal.

So thank you and congratulations.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, on a completely different matter, we are more than a year from the technical end of the COVID-19 recession.

There are more than 9 million job openings in the country, the most in American history by far. Three safe and effective vaccines are easily available all across our country, free of charge, for any adult who wants one. Medical contraindications are rare, and CDC data tell us that, once somebody is fully vaccinated, their risk of dying from COVID-19 absolutely plummets right down to the normal range of risk that we implicitly face on a daily basis. Vaccines may not magically eliminate the virus overnight, but the evidence tells us that vaccines can eliminate the degree to which the virus represents a unique crisis.

We may not be entirely out of the woods—the Delta uptick makes that clear—but it is time to stop governing as if we were trapped in a permanent economic meltdown. It factually is simply not the case, but the Democratic Party's far-left flank is resisting this simple fact. They were counting on this terrible but temporary pandemic to be their Trojan horse for permanent socialism. So they don't want to admit that the vaccines are transitioning COVID from a crisis into a challenge—case in point, the surreal episode that has unfolded this past week over evictions.

For a year and a half now, the government has basically told landlords they have little or no recourse if tenants stop paying the rent. This isn't just about massive corporations that some think could eat losses forever; family businesses who own one or two units have had to keep paying their bills, their taxes, and their mortgages the whole time.

Congress already sent billions of dollars to States for rental assistance. The problem is with State governments that have been pathetically slow to get the money out, but when some Socialist House Members fail to convince their own fellow Democrats to extend this nationwide socialism through legislation, they somehow prevailed on President Biden through PR stunts—PR stunts.

One day before the President's announcement, his senior adviser said the President had “double-, triple-, quadruple-checked” whether he had the legal authority to do this, and he concluded he did not. The President himself admitted that legal scholars find his position untenable, but he still caved and did it.

The far left wants to turn this terrible but temporary pandemic into a Trojan horse for permanent socialism, and the administration is letting them call the shots.

DEBT LIMIT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in just a few days our colleagues will start ramming through yet another—another—reckless taxing-and-spending spree: trillions more in inflationary spending when families just want good jobs and stable prices.

But there is something funny happening. Even as Democrats crow about how all this spending is so good and so needed, they are petrified to vote for the credit limit increase that would make it possible.

The Democrats are about to tell Republicans to go take a hike and start tteeing up trillions more dollars in borrowing and spending, of course, without a single Republican vote. Ah, but at the same time, they are extolling the virtues of their latest socialist shopping list, they are afraid to up the limit on their credit card. They want Republicans to give them political cover for the partisan debt bomb that they will go right on to detonate with zero input from us. My colleagues are so mixed up on this, it is almost comical.

The sums that we borrowed and spent through 2020—through last year, through the last administration, through the actual economic emergency—were largely covered by the previous debt suspension that just expired, but Democrats want a new debt limit increase for the new borrowing and the new spending that they willfully piled up since they took power: about \$2 trillion back in March, trillions more sometime soon.

So they want to unleash another reckless taxing-and-spending spree with zero Republican input—oh, oh—but when the bill comes, they say it is time to split the check. When the bill comes, it is time to split the check. Initiating another budget reconciliation process in a 50-50 Senate is as willfully partisan, as “go it alone” as it gets, especially in a Senate that keeps proving we can do bipartisan work.

So, look, if our colleagues want to ram through yet another reckless taxing-and-spending spree without our input, if they want all this spending and debt to be their signature legacy, they should leap at the chance to own every bit of it.

So let me make something perfectly clear: If they don't need or want our input, they won't get our help. They won't get our help with the debt limit increase that these reckless plans will require. I could not be more clear. They have the ability. They control the White House; they control the House; they control the Senate. They can raise the debt ceiling, and if it is raised, they will do it.

TRIBUTE TO NICK ROSSI

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now, on another matter, this week, Senate Republicans are saying goodbye to some all-star staffers.

Nick Rossi, the chief of staff to our whip, Senator THUNE, has spent 15 years mastering the ins and outs of the Senate.

This former FBI agent has used his Harvard Law horsepower to steer offices, committees, and our entire conference in the right direction. Our whip